



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE DOUBLE MONSTER ROSA-JOSEPHA BLAZEK.¹

ROSA and Josepha Blazek were born January 20th, 1878, a Skreychov, in Bohemia. Their birth, which seems to have taken place without any difficulty, was accomplished under the care of a village nurse.

The mother, aged twenty-two years, had been delivered, two years previously, of a well-formed and healthy daughter. The parents are sturdy peasants, of some means, but of limited intelligence. Until recently they have been opposed to a public exhibition of their children.

A short notice printed at Prague in 1878 shows that six months after their birth they were visited by M. Auguste Breisky, then a professor of the German Faculty of Medicine of that city, and director of the Gynecological Clinic. After an examination, M. Breisky stated that the development of Rosa-Josepha was in accordance with their age. M. Marcel Baudoin relates that soon after their birth the parents, horrified, took the advice of an old woman, and left them eight days without food, expecting them to die.

At first sight the sisters Rosa-Josepha give the impression of two little girls, rather small for their age (now thirteen years), very blonde, slightly pale, with a gentle, amiable manner, and eyes somewhat languid in expression. On seeing them sitting side by side on the same footstool one would hardly suspect their union when they are dressed; but if one makes the slightest movement the other follows immediately.

The trunks are not parallel, the axes of the vertebral columns diverging perceptibly, making a large V, the apex of which corresponds to the union of the pelves. Each trunk is bent on itself at an angle of 45° , to give the faces their proper positions. Moreover, the heads are inclined a little toward each other, for the same reason. The contact of the trunks is less—although Rosa-Josepha is only thirteen years old—than that of the double mon-

ster Millie-Christine, aged twenty-two, in whom the right shoulder of one individual touches the left of the other.

The faces of these two little girls closely resemble each other ; they have a rather old and worn appearance, but the mental and physical strain to which they have been subjected since leaving their own country would account for this to a certain degree.

In figure the resemblance is extraordinary,—much more so than between ordinary brothers and sisters, and even more than is often the case between twins of the same sex.

It is only when one examines them in profile that it can be seen that they are united by the posterior pelvic wall as completely as the famous Hungarian pygopage, Helen-Judith, descriptions of whom may be found in all the old works on monsters.

The angle formed by the bodies—the point of the V representing the trunks—is made by the intimate union of the sacral and coccygean regions at the center, and those of the four nates by the lateral parts. One finds there a real saddle, of which the bony skeleton resembles a wooden saddle similar to those of the Breton horsemen. There is a single pelvis of exaggerated size, consisting of four iliac bones, to which are attached the four legs, which are well formed, if one can judge from the gambols in which these young persons indulge without difficulty.

Beneath the sacral conjunction, in a quadrilateral, dome-like space, limited by the origin of the four lower limbs, there is found a region the description of which is of the first importance in the history of monsters. In the language of a German gynecologist who is very exact on this point, and also of M. Isch-Wall, there would seem at first sight to be a single set of organs ; one urethra, one uterus, and one anus. It is certain, however, that there are two bladders, for a desire to urinate is not felt by both individuals at the same time ; in this they resemble other pygopages, and it is easily understood if one believes that the allantoïdes are formed when the union of the embryos takes place, and by reason of their very anterior situation, they are not close to the point of contact, which is posterior.

The other internal genital organs are double.

The rectum is probably single for some distance, as they are actuated by a single impulse to defecate; but there are undoubtedly two large intestines.

According to Breisky, at the age six months there was a remarkable asymmetry of the heads of the two children, very noticeable if one looked at them from above or behind.

As regards psychological phenomena, it is now well known that monsters of this kind constitute two distinct personalities, and that one has to deal with individuals where brains function entirely independently of each other.

The two girls speak "Czech,"—that is to say, the language of their native land. They can occupy themselves in many ways independently of each other. One sleeps while the other is awake. The showman relates many amusing stories about the different sensations that they experience, but these need to be verified. It has been proved, however, that they have not the same tastes in the matter of food. One likes beer, the other wine; one is fond of salad, the other detests it, etc., etc.; when one is thirsty the other does not necessarily experience the same sensation.

The two hearts do not beat in unison, for the radial pulses are not synchronous.

With Millie-Christine, Paul Bert demonstrated that a touch on the lower limbs of one individual was perceived by the other; whence it was concluded that the *caudæ equinæ* of the spinal marrow were united. It does not seem to be so with Rosa-Josepha; there is only a very restricted zone in which a sensation may be experienced by both at the same time, and this zone corresponds to the middle part of the skin which covers the transverse mass placed between the pelves,—a place where it might be possible to separate the two girls if it should become necessary through the death of one of them. It can be inferred from this that the union is less intimate than in the case of Millie-Christine, and that if the spinal canals communicate at the level of the sacrum—which is probable—the cords are either not united at all or but slightly.

The movements are supple and graceful. When one walks the other does not have to walk backwards. Progression takes place in many ways that would take too long to describe here. Ordinarily, as with Millie-Christine, the two internal feet advance together, then the two external ones. Rosa-Josepha can walk, each by herself, the one carrying the other. The walker throws herself a little in advance, the one who is carried resting on the other's hip, having only to lift her feet a little from the ground. Sometimes they walk on three legs, or even two, going up stairways, and practicing the dancing lesson which is given them every day.

The pathological history of their pygopage would be very interesting if it could be exactly known. It is on record that one of the children was sick, when a year old, with croup which the other did not have. Shortly after the well individual was seized with convulsions, which did not attack the one which had had the croup.

The case of Rosa-Josepha is not entirely analogous and comparable to the two other pygopages, Helen-Judith and Millie-Christine. The former, who has disappeared from public view since 1874, had the spinal cords united, but in Rosa-Josepha this does not seem to be the case. In other respects these two girls resemble Helen-Judith, and they probably constitute a type intermediate between the latter and Millie-Christine.